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E.S.R. Series 39.



AN "S.O.S."
IN BEHALF OF
GERMANY'S STUDENTS

By
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Published by the
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WORLD'S STUDENT CHRISTIAN FEDERATION.

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Editorial Note.

The material contained in the body of this pamphlet is from a magazine article written recently by Robert H. Best, an American journalist now making a special study of European post-war educational conditions and problems. With the consent of the author and the approval of The European Student Relief, newspapers and magazines of all countries may republish it in whole or in part.

AT the door of a small country house about two miles distant from a university town in the south of Germany one cold morning during early January of this year, a young man stood and knocked. From the farmer occupying the house, when the door was opened to him, he begged permission to sleep in the small attic of the house for the remaining winter months. In return for this favor he offered to plant the farmer's garden when Spring arrived and to do odd jobs around the house.

Common rather than strange was the picture this young man presented as he stood asking for a place to sleep and offering his services rather cheaply in exchange. Frayed from hard usage, his overcoat yet plainly showed its army blanket origin; his feet had no cause to complain against his shoes for lack of ventilation or fresh air; and

his hat, had it been endowed with the gift of speech, could have told a story of service long, hard and faithful.

A tramp he appeared, but was not. Instead, as he stood not only offering but begging to be allowed to do manual labor, this young man became a symbol with a two-fold significance. He was and is today a German student, and as such he is representative alike of a great educational catastrophe and of an equally great educational revolution.

Just a Story?

"I am the son of a farmer, Sir," this student related, "and I am heir to the largest farm in our village. But a rather peculiar circumstance compels me to seek shelter from you. Twelve years ago, having accumulated by hard labor a small fortune, my father retired from active agricultural pursuits and let our farm at a fixed annual rental on a sixteen-year lease. Today that sum will not buy either of us a pair of shoes. The tenant in the meantime, practically free from the payment of any rent and profiting by a continuing rise in the sales prices of his farm products, is leading an easy life.

"Despite a very advanced age, my father is compelled to work as a day laborer and my mother as a scrub woman. I also must earn my livelihood from day to day, and this I am trying to do while continuing my studies in the medical department of the university. Last Summer I worked in the Ruhr coal mines and as a wood cutter in the forests; but the money earned by these arduous labors lost nine-tenths of its value within a few weeks after the opening of school. For more than a month past I have literally been living from hand to mouth, and today I must find some part-time job, give up my studies when only one year from my exams or else starve to death."

In a rather difficult condition this student found himself placed, one must admit. And yet, in comparison with many thousand others among his 120,000 fellow students in Germany he was very fortunate. Being in need of a chore boy, the farmer to whom he told his story accepted his offer. The attic room to which he was assigned, being directly over the kitchen, was warmed moderately well by heat from the stove below and from the stove flue which passed through one corner of the room.

Always glad to oblige his benefactors, our student soon won the heart of the farmer's wife, and she in turn made life more comfortable for him. As a reward for his helpful efforts she presented him with a cup of steaming coffee each morning, before he left for the university two miles away and each evening with a couple of sandwiches, a bowl of hot milk and bread or some sweet which had been left over from her own supper.

A Lucky Student.

Yes, this particular student is lucky indeed!

He has a room, which, though in an attic, has been dry the whole winter and warm enough to allow him to study in a fair degree of comfort. Hundreds (possibly several thousand) of his comrades have not been able to pay for even an unheated room, but have been compelled to drop their university courses altogether and seek regular employment. Conservatively estimated, at least 40,000 others have been and are living in rooms which have not been heated once since the beginning of last December; and another 60,000 have not had a fire more than twice a week during the same time. And, throughout the greater part of Germany during the winter months an unheated room means dampness as well as bitter and penetrating cold.

He has food, which, though limited in quantity, is appetizingly prepared and sufficient to ward off real hunger. There is not one of the 100,000 above

Concerning student life in Germany today one foreign student studying at Friedrich Wilhelm University, Berlin recently wrote an article for a Berlin newspaper. One paragraph of this article reads as follows:

"One may read from across the ocean of the distress in Europe, believe it fully, and then react as if it were a foggy myth. But when one sees fellows who sit daily at his elbows, and with whom he swaps lecture notes, reduced to dire straits, it certainly throws discord into the tenor of his life."

mentioned but who would gladly exchange places with him in if they could obtain the food which the farmer's wife gives him each day. Almost 70,000 of them, eating cheap and often badly prepared food day after day in overcrowded student mensas, cannot but be envious of him and of twenty-odd thousand others who eat equally frugal diets, but at home and therefore better cooked.

Less than twenty thousand of Germany's students are living today in even moderate comfort, and a very small number indeed in circumstances comparable to the living conditions of students in Great Britain, the Americas or any other western nation. One girl student who fainted recently while taking her

examinations was found upon investigation to have been living for over two weeks on apples and a few crusts of bread.

Our doctor-farmer likewise is able to study under much more favorable conditions than a large majority of other German students. Bodily comfort, or at least the absence of actual physical pain, is an absolute prerequisite to study of any nature. Unheated living quarters cause a great overcrowding of all reading rooms and study halls in every one of Germany's universities: and even here sometimes the principal heat is that emanating from the bodies of its occupants.

The congestion in these assembly rooms is not lessened by the fact that few students possess their own text books. It is probable that not one student in Germany today possesses a complete set of the books required in his courses, and very few of them are able to afford even one book.

In health also the young "tramp-student" whom we first met on the door step of the farm house is more fortunate than his fellow intellectuals. A brisk walk of four miles to and from school each day keeps him in physical trim, and a sufficiency of food plus a warm dry room keeps him strong and able to ward off disease. Not so with many of the other students. Cold damp rooms are already taking their toll in tuberculosis and pneumonia, lack of nourishing food daily is breaking down the physical resisting qualities of approximately 100,000 of their number and very few indeed have food enough to give them strength for any form of exercise.

He also has a job, and a pleasant job at that. For the Spring Vacation, which is six weeks in length, he has been employed on full time by the farmer to assist in planting the crops. An appreciable number of his comrades in the meantime are engaged in the much more disagreeable tasks of mining coal etc., and a yet larger percentage are looking in vain for any kind of a job because of an industrial depression consequent to the occupation of the Ruhr by the French. From 8,000 to 10,000 have been deprived thus of work in the Ruhr mines alone.

Why Do They "Carry On?"

Beset on every hand by difficulties which require nothing less than Herculean labors to overcome, and having small reason to hope for an improved state of affairs at any date in the near future, it is astounding that so many of these students hold on. And yet, hold on they do!

Why?

To this question most Germans reply that the reason is two-fold. First, the students themselves are possessed of a certain characteristic and in-

The following paragraphs are taken from a letter written by a French University woman to an English University man during January 1923, and they are based on a visit of investigation made by her to universities where she was well acquainted and able to get at the real facts:

"I promised to tell you something about my impression of the need among German students. In the nine universities visited I saw quite a few students whom I had known before in 1921. The difference in their appearance gave me a distinct shock. I remember one girl with whom I had lived two days in Berlin

eighteen months ago. I could hardly believe she was the same, and I drew back as if her ghost had risen before my eyes. She has not been ill, she is not ill; but she is hungry.

"I mention one, but in almost every University I have seen heartrending cases of suffering bravely borne. When one thinks how much food a little foreign money will buy and when one remembers what consummate skill these women have for making a very very little go a long way, one certainly wishes for the power to make friends in other countries see those sunken cheeks and grey complexions. If people only knew!"

herent idealism which makes the pursuit of knowledge attractive per se and above everything else. Again, the occupations for untrained persons are already overcrowded, and it is economically wise to continue ones university training even at the hazard of ruining ones health permanently.

Back of these two reasons there are possibly some others. For several generations there has been growing up among a certain class of German citizens the tradition that the sons of the family must receive a university education. There is a decided distinction between a university graduate and one who fails of graduation by even so much as one year's attendance at the school, this distinction being not only social but economic. A university degree must be obtained before one can become a doctor of medicine, a

lawyer, a teacher or a member of any other professional class. Thus, a family will endure almost any degree of hardship rather than see its members drop out of the respected student class, and the students themselves will complete their courses of study if it is humanly possible to do so.

Overshadowing all these explanations, as well as underlying most of them there is yet another reason for the persistence and tenacity with which the German students hold on to their university careers. As in other countries throughout central Europe, so in Germany a new feeling is spreading rapidly throughout the student world. This new feeling may be summed up in one word——Service.

Service to an ideal, service unselfish, service unremitting, service to ones fellows, service of the highest nature to ones country; an indefinable longing to prepare themselves for a life of some more useful service is the dynamo which is driving a large part of Germany's 120,000 students on toward the goal of a more complete education despite the terrific obstacles which fate seems continually to be throwing in their way.

Four Words With a Meaning.

How are the German students transforming this rather visionary idea of "service" into a tangible reality? Does their attitude toward life today differ from that of their pre-war colleagues? Are they themselves making any concrete efforts to improve their desperate living, or rather existence conditions? The answer to these questions and many others which might be asked apropos of German student conditions today is to be found in two words. Cooperation as opposed to their former individualism and energetic self-help in contrast with a by-gone frivolity and refusal to assume responsibilities; these are the slogans of the present day German students.

In trying to understand fully what the words "Self-Help," "Cooperation," and "Service" really signify in German Student life it may be useful to compare the student of 1914 with the student of 1923. By all means the most notable difference is the appearance and growth in importance of the "Werkstudenten" or Work Student.

Before the war almost every student considered it much too far beneath his dignity and completely out of the realm of possibility for him to engage in any form of manual or physical labor. And not only the students but the university authorities as well took this attitude. With very few exceptions, in each university it was a rule that no student should engage in any gainful occupation while matriculated in the university. Like a stone wall before any young student daring enough to contemplate work as a means of earning his university expenses, the trade unions also stood. Exceedingly jealous of their rights and what may be called the privileges of their "caste," workers in all trades resented having their jobs "stolen" by outsiders.

"Work."

In sharp contrast with this rather irresponsible and somewhat "snob-breeding" life stands forth the "work student" of today. Last summer over 50% of all the students in Germany were engaged in actual work. Tutoring and clerical work claimed a small portion, but to most of them "work" signified no such light tasks. Into the mines with shovel and pick, into the forests with axe and maul, into the fields with pitchfork, rake and plow, into the fireman's seat of an engine cab with grimy hands and dirty overalls; anywhere in fact that an honest Mark could be earned students went with zeal and determination. If the bones of the old-time university rectors rattled in their graves (as they must have done) over this radical innovation the students heard them not, or, hearing, they paid no heed. A new day had dawned for them, and they troubled not at all over clouded sunsets of days already coupled with the past.

"Service."

In preparation for a life of more useful service to their country and to their fellowmen the German students are turning in ever-increasing numbers from strictly cultural studies in arts and pure sciences to trade, commerce, banking and the many sided industrial courses. For the

"The need among Goettingen students increases from day to day. More and more students are compelled to give up their studies. Owing to financial difficulties, a large number were forced to leave the university long before the commencement of the Christmas vacation, either to try their hand at raising money privately as work students, or to continue studying privately at home. The health of the remaining students is far from good; it has happened here recently, in several instances, that candidates have broken down during their examinations as a result of under-nourishment and exhaustion."

(Extract from one of many similar reports received during the past few months by the E.S.R. office in Berlin.)

first time in history the German universities are giving a distinctive place to the faculty of economics and political economy, these branches having been tossed back and forth heretofore between the faculties of law and philosophy. In Berlin University the lecture halls for these subjects are greatly overcrowded, whereas not long ago they were perhaps only one-third or one-half filled.

Equally remarkable with the increasing popularity of the "practical" courses is the German student's fast changing outlook on life in general. "The old-time spectacular life, ——— beer drinking, wine-cellar political discussions, aristocratic social organizations and duelling ——— is passing away." There is coming instead an increasing number of students who face life like men.

Political discussions still exist, but they are of a new and more serious character. They are mingled with more economics and common sense, stronger convictions and less beer. The bright caps and sashes of the social organizations are yet to be seen occasionally in every university town, and a fresh cut across the face, bespeaking a recent duel, is not an infrequent occurrence; these things have not passed entirely away, but they are fast being crowded into the background by the new "work student with a service ideal."

In this connection a word might be said about the German students attitude toward religion. Apparently there has been an increasing number who take an interest in religious ideals since the war. The "Youth Movement," which has attracted so much attention throughout the world, has done much to enliven the esthetic, ethical and spiritual interests of the younger classes. This movement, in its original aspect, was a protest against a growing materialism and the chaffingly close and binding rules of society in Germany. Many are now realizing that this movement is not sufficient; and as a result of this realization the youth of the nation have begun to take a more direct and lively interest in true religion.

"Cooperation."

The third "big idea" which has grown up in the German Student world since the war is that of Cooperation, as already mentioned. Returning from the war in 1918 the German students found themselves in very difficult circumstances. Most of the old familiar guide posts had disappeared, and educational roads were beset with numerous hindrances. The natural thing happened. A number of the leading students from each university met

A "health survey" just completed in Tuebingen reveals the rather startling, but not very suprising fact that, due to undernourishment, the students at this university have a deficiency in weight of 6 to 20 pounds in comparison with American students of equal age and height. The average deficiency of the 1772 men and women examined was 4.004 kilograms, or about 9.05 pounds.

together and charted a new route toward their educational goal. They organized the "Wirtschaftshilfe der Deutschen Studentenschaft," an "Economic Self-Help Organization of the Students of Germany" which now has 43 branches serving all of the universities and technical high schools of the country.

In this article it is impossible to sketch the growth of this organization in detail or to cover its now multitudinous activities. Suffice it to say that the Wirtschaftshilfe has the hearty support of the German government, the leaders of German industry, and of the most prominent bankers. With them the closest contact is maintained both for the purpose of obtaining direct aid and vacation employment. The organization is officered by highly capable university graduates who devote to it their entire time.

"Self-Help."

In general the great national Wirtschaftshilfe serves a four-fold purpose:

1. It operates a "Warenvermittlungsstelle" or Central Buying Agency by means of which food-stuffs and other materials are bought in bulk and in large wholesale quantities for distribution to the local organizations.

2. It carries on an active and a continual publicity campaign for gifts of money and goods to the needy students, such gifts being administered through their organization.

3. It distributes funds and other assistance to the local organizations, allowing each one more or less autonomy in the specific administration of this help.

4. It operates a Student Loan Bank, the object of which is to help gifted and tried students, carefully chosen by local committees of teachers and students, through at least the last half year before the final examinations. Into this bank all students pay a fixed sum each semester during their first years at the universities. Upon reaching the final stages of their education the more brilliant of them (possibly all who need it eventually) may be free from financial worry. Easy terms and liberal arrangements for repayment are some of the features of the plan.

The activities of each of the 43 local self-help organizations are manifold. A brief outline of one of them will serve to make their scope more manifest:

1. *Individual-relief*: This is always reduced to the absolute minimum. However, special cases do arise; and these include gifts of garments (second-hand) to students who are suffering from exposure and threatened with serious illness; free meals for students who are absolutely faced with starvation; the payment of an occasional room rent to prevent a very

TAKEN almost at random from several thousand "life stories" found in requests made by students for financial assistance, each of the following statements contains its own tragedy. Multiply them many thousand times and one has a composite picture of student life in Germany today.

M, a student of medicine living with her parents, has an invalid mother and a father who is too old to engage in any gainful occupation. The family have lived for several years past on small rents (which today are practically non-existent when value is considered.) She is compelled, therefore to do all the housework in the mornings, she serves in the mensa each noon for her dinner and in the evenings she does stenographic job work for local merchants, etc.

deserving student from being thrown into the street; and sometimes a small amount of coal is given to students who are going up for their examinations. Every student applying for help of any kind is "card-indexed" and thoroughly investigated before any allowance is granted him.

2. *Employment bureau*:—This title is self-explanatory. The bureau works in close coordination with the municipal employment registry and thus maintains an acme of efficiency. In daily increasing numbers students are calling upon offices such as these for assistance in obtaining part time work and vacation employment.

3. *Interpreting and translating office*:—A prospectus issued recently by this department of one "local" advised business men others that students of this particular university were prepared to do translation and interpretation in 35 different languages.

4. *Printing office and bookbindery*:—Textbooks, pamphlets, dissertations, catalogues, propaganda letters and job work for outsiders as well as students are turned out by this office. Close cooperation is maintained also with the translating office.

5. *General store*:—Here students are able to buy at retail from 30% to 50% cheaper than elsewhere, this being possible because of the advantageous purchases of the central *Wirtschaftshilfe*.

6. *Typewriting department*:—At the beginning of the past winter term the manufacturers of all makes of typewriters in Germany offered to let the cooperative societies of the "High Schools" have machines free of charge. Many students have thus been enabled to do various bits of job work, a small percentage of the money thus earned being paid to the cooperative as rent on the machine.

7. *Laundry, barber shop, clothing and shoe repair*:—Of, for and by the students, of course.

8. *Lodging register*:—The necessity for such a department can be understood very easily when one considers that residential building has been at a standstill in Germany since the beginning of the war. The great influx of foreigners has also added to the scarcity of rooms. By law, apartments can be leased at a rate only seven times that of 1914; but no such law applies to single rooms, and hence rents of 200 times the pre-war rate are demanded by some landladies. And even thus, they sometimes refuse to let their rooms to students at all, preferring to have them empty half the time if they can let them at exorbitant rates for the other months. The students of one university, realizing this, advertised in the local paper requesting a room for a foreigner. Sixty-five replies were received in three days. Thereupon, with the approval of the police, the students promptly called upon those persons who had sent the letters and commandeered the rooms.

R is a student of music who is considered to possess great talent. Her father is dead and her mother is dependent on a pension. She is 19 years old and very energetic. All of her food she prepares on a small petroleum lamp. Rising early, she tidies her room while it is yet dark, and is ready to begin practicing from music on her violin as soon as daylight begins to appear. This work she often continues into the night, playing from memory and wearing gloves to prevent her fingers from becoming numb with cold.

J, a student of mechanical engineering, is one of Germany's 80,000 work students. His father, a country doctor, is earning almost nothing at present although he works from early till late. Last summer he worked as a hauler in the potash mines. Since his home was 25 kilometers from the mine it was necessary for him to leave home on his bicycle at 4:30 each morning. During three months of extra hard labor he saved 21,000 Marks, worth today less than one American dollar.

9. *Exchange libraries*:—A very important branch because few students can afford to possess even one book privately.

10. *Health clinic and dispensary*:—Here students may at all times receive medical advice without incurring a doctor's bill, and from experts they may

ascertain whether or not they can cut down further on their food allowance without permanently injuring their health. If a student is broken down physically and poverty-stricken financially hospital care is provided free of charge.

11. *Mensa academica or student dining room*:—Just what its name implies, and cuts eating expenses approximately 60%. One of the most important departments of every self-help organization. Many professors eat in the mensas with the students. Students, wives of the professors, and other volunteer workers furnish the necessary service. These dining rooms have been designated, "The Thermometer of Student Poverty," the number eating in each mensa always being in direct proportion to the student needs. The plainest of food is always used, meat appearing on the menus rarely if ever. Students would certainly eat elsewhere if possible. Visitors to these mensas invariably turn their steps toward a

restaurant very soon after finishing their meal.

12. *Student garden*:—Through this institution fresh vegetables are obtained more cheaply than they can be bought in the markets. Incidentally, many of the students are thus able to get beneficial exercise. In one university no student is allowed to eat in the mensa who fails to report each week for a certain number of work hours in the garden.

Prosperity Dreams Begin to Fade.

By mutual service, hard work and cooperative as well as individual self-help the German students gradually regained a position of semi-economic independence in the two years immediately following the war. Some help was needed from foreign countries, but with the opening months of 1922 there was every indication that the students themselves and their Wirtschaftshilfe would be able to "go it alone" by the end of the year.

At the Turnov international student conference in April, 1922, with the approval of the German student leaders, only one thousand dollars was

IN letters received recently from a number of universities the following paragraphs were found:

"We have had to drop meat altogether from our mensa dinners."

"Hash once each week is all the meat that we can afford."

"The country people living near our university have responded very nobly to our needs. An intensive campaign into the surrounding districts last week netted donations of 67,000 eggs."

"The money which you sent to our organization was invested in necessary goods at once; and when the mark depreciated in value its worth was multiplied many times."

"We used your gift to procure an electrotpe printing press. The dearth of text books we hope to overcome to a small extent by duplicating copies of lectures on this machine."

"For your recent gift to us we offer you our heartiest thanks. This money is by far the largest amount which we have received from any quarter."

"Your gift reached us just in time. With it we were able to purchase three steam kettles for our mensa kitchen. These kettles would now cost 20 times what we paid for them. Please accept our heartiest thanks."

allotted for relief work in Germany during the remainder of the year. Hardly had this student conference adjourned, when rifts began to appear on the horizon of the German student world. The national currency was inflated with a deluge of paper money, the individual Mark dropped in value, and a large part of the capital of the student organizations was lost. Then came a period of national and international uncertainty, a further drop in the Mark resulted, and more capital disappeared as if into thin air.

Between November 1, 1921 and July 1, 1922 the German Mark dropped, in terms of the American dollar, only from 200 to 400. Beginning in July, however, the decline became increasingly rapid, reaching 1,000 in August, almost 2,000 in September and 3,000 in October. On November 1 it stood at 4,538, but by the eighth of the month it had doubled within a week to over 9,000 and had begun a dizzy career which eventually may stop anywhere or nowhere.

In June of 1922 the Government allowed the Student Loan Bank 100,000,000 Marks on which to begin operation. This capital then had a value of approximately 533,360 dollars. In July 60,000 determined students entered the mines, factories, forests and fields of Germany in search of work which would pay their expenses for the next scholastic year.

Disaster!

On January 11 of this year the French army entered the Ruhr. Whatever impetus or incentive the German currency needed to cause it utterly to go to pieces this event gave. Each little Mark seemed to fall all over itself and its neighbors in the general downhill rush toward devaluation. One could almost see them shrink to nothing in ones hands.

And with what result!

With the collapse of the Mark all student enterprises, caught as if in a maelstrom against which

no efforts can prevail, were utterly swamped. Today the Bank's capital is worth less than 5,000 dollars; and 20,000 Marks, earned at from 20 to 60 Marks per hour, the maximum that the brightest and most hard-working student could save from his summer's work would be worth less than a

The arrival of the spring vacation gave the Wirtschaftshilfe another great opportunity to help Germany's work-students. The disorganization in the Ruhr industries having cut off from them the possibility of work in the mines of this district, the Wirtschaftshilfe, using money advanced by E.S.R., equipped 1000 students with working clothes and lent them money for their railroad fare to the Halle brown coal district, where the Germans are working 24 hours each day to prevent their coal supply from becoming exhausted. Here they have been housed in some old barracks and fed in the student mensa of Halle University, a remarkable feat achieved only through cooperation between the various university local self-help branches.

single American dollar if he had been able by some miracle to save it till now. Neither the Wirtschaftshilfe nor the private student could obtain protection against this loss because a national law prohibits everyone from buying foreign money with their Marks.

With kaleidoscopic quickness student conditions in Germany have been going from bad to worse for the past six months. In October 1922 summer earnings already had been halved in purchasing value, and naturally the students were worried; November found what they yet retained reduced by nine-tenths, and their condition became tragic; December brought no relief, and with their last Mark gone, they were filled with despondency and gloom; but to January 1923 and the succeeding months has remained the opportunity for giving perfection to disaster, for dealing the knock-out blow. Practically the whole student world to-day is in a hysteria of despair.

Statistics relative to anything in Germany at present are out of date even before leaving the typewriter and ancient history before they can be set up in type. A few comparisons showing "which way the wind blows" may serve a small purpose, however, and a few of them are given herewith:

Figures that Talk.

Not since the Mark started its decline immediately after the war have the average student resources been more than half equal to the official "existence minimum figure" published monthly by the government, and today they are worth only one-sixth of this figure. Thus, in the first quarter of 1921 the average student income was 480 Marks and the government figure 910. The ratio was 925:1640 in January 1922 and 10000:68506 in December of the same year. In January 1923 it had reached 30000:112027, and today it stands at approximately 40000:250000. This means nothing more or less than that Germany's students are trying to continue their studies on less than one-sixth of the amount designated by the government as the "existence minimum."

With 12 Marks in 1914 one could buy a pair of good boots; today this sum of money hardly will purchase a single sheet of writing paper. 40 Marks in 1914 would buy the following: 1 extra large goose, 200 pounds of potatoes, 5 pounds of butter, 50 pounds of wheat flour, 450 pounds of fuel coal, 2 dozen eggs, 1 big loaf of bread, 1 quart of milk, 1 herring, and 1

That all classes in Germany are behind the students in their efforts to save their Wirtschaftshilfe and to become economically independent was shown at the National Convention of Wirtschaftshilfe leaders held at Tuebingen University early in March. Representing the General Trade Unions. Herrn Knoll, Germany's veteran labor leader was present at every session during the first four days of the conference. And he was present not only as an observer but as an adviser. On numerous occasions the discussions on self-help activities were facilitated by his wise counsels. This activity and interest on his part is particularly significant because the trade unions formerly were very hostile to the Wirtschaftshilfe.

The most influential banking circles were represented by Herrn von Stauss, director of the Deutsche Bank and by his per-

pound each of flour, sugar and salt; 40 Marks today will not pay the postage on a letter from Berlin to Hamburg.

A custom-tailored suit of excellent quality was worth 60 Marks in 1914;

sonal representative Herr Bramenn. Full cooperation and aid for the Wirtschaftshilfe were pledged by him.

Dr. Schmidt, Secretary of the well-known Geheimrat Duisburg was present to voice greetings from the great industrials and to encourage the Wirtschaftshilfe in its work. Likewise, official government interest was expressed by the Minister President of Wuerttemberg in person and by various prominent officials at Berlin by telegrams,

In company with the student representative each of the participating universities, almost without exception, sent a professor. From the German Association of professors an official representative was sent also; and from these two facts it is not difficult to conclude that the ancient hostility of the university authorities toward the "werk-studenten" is a thing of the past.

today this is the price of a very poor cigarette. A small box of matches now costs as many Marks as did 1 dozen shirts, 2 pairs of shoes and a dozen pairs of socks before the outbreak of the war. For 8,000 Marks formerly one could buy a family cottage with orchard and garden attached; today this amount is less than the price of a kilogram of butter. A good milch cow in July 1914 cost 300 Marks; a street car fare today is 350 Marks. And the end is not yet!

The futility of saving ones meagre earnings and the impossibility of making a budget or in any way planning for the future may be comprehended very easily from the following table of prices prevailing in Germany during the past eight years:

These articles cost	in July 1914 Marks	in Jan. 1920 Marks	in Jan. 1921 Marks	in Jan. 1922 Marks	in Jan. 1923 Marks	today April 1923 Marks
1 pencil	— .05	— .40	— .80	3.—	150.—	900.—
1 tram fare	— .10	— .50	— .60	1.50	100.—	350.—
1 egg	— .07	2.20	3.—	4.—	185.—	290.—
1 note book (40 pages)	— .25	1.75	2.25	9.50	150.—	220.—
1 litre milk	— .20	1.—	2.10	6.—	320.—	800.—
1 kilogram Bread . . .	— .24	4.—	7.—	12.—	400.—	700.—
1 „ potatoes	— .07	— .86	1.20	3.—	20.—	175.—
1 „ margerine	1.40	16.—	29.—	45.—	3,000.—	7,000.—
1 „ sugar	— .48	3.50	12.—	15.—	750.—	2,800.—
1 „ butter	2.80	50.—	70.—	90.—	7,000.—	19,000.—
1 pair socks	1.—	15.—	22.50	32.—	2,500.—	4,000.—
100 kilograms coal . . .	2.60	26.80	46.50	67.—	4,910.—	40,000.—
1 shirt	6.—	72.—	100.—	175.—	20,000.—	35,000.—
1 scientific book	13.—	25.—	50.—	90.—	10,000.—	20,000.—
1 pair shoes	12.50	120.—	150.—	250.—	25,000.—	48,000.—
1 suit clothes	50.—	600.—	1,000.—	2,200.—	100,000.—	375,000.—

Warding off the crash.

Fortunately for the German students, when the final crash was imminent there was ready to be extended to them at least one helping hand, strong and willing and trained to meet just such emergencies by extensive experience in a number of other European countries. Organized in 1920 under

the auspices of the World's Student Christian Federation, The European Student Relief Fund has had its hand on the economic pulse of the German student body for over two years through its national central office for Germany at 17 Tieckstrasse, Berlin.

As soon as the students were threatened by the governmental malady of "paperization," like skilled doctors, the representatives of this organization, popularly known throughout Europe as the E. S. R., knew just what remedy to apply, where to apply it and how this application could best be made. They realized that the opening of feeding kitchens where destitute students might be cared for and the organizing of other forms of "direct"

NO persons in Germany today are in better position to understand what E.S.R. has meant to the German students than the representatives of these students. Not without significance, therefore, is the following statement made during the first week of March 1923 at the National Self-Help Conference at Tuebingen University by Dr. Robert Tillmanns, Secretary of the Wirtschaftshilfe.

"All of you know," Dr. Williams said, "how greatly we are indebted to the European Student Relief, which now is conducting its relief work among the students of all the needy countries of Europe. Beginning its work in Germany just as the Wirtschaftshilfe was organized, its representatives at once recognized that the greatest good for the Ger-

help would involve time and an expensive administrative force and that in meeting the situation as a whole such methods would be about as effective as feeding water to an elephant with a tea spoon. Without hesitation therefore they decided to make an effort to save the students through their own economic self-help organization.

This prompt action by the E.S.R., without doubt, has meant more

man students lay in strengthening the self-help schemes of the various branch offices. It is thanks to this thought that the Wirtschaftshilfe and the 43 local university relief offices exist today. The strengthening of these organizations has been essentially a service of The European Student Relief.

"We thank this organization especially because we know that its funds come from warm sympathetic hearts. Its work transcends the solely materialistic, for it aims to cooperate in the restoration of peace to the world. The assistance given us by The European Student Relief, coming as a little ray of dawning light in a time of heavy oppression, will make us strong to hold out in our hard struggle."

to the German students during the past few months than any other factor or group of factors. But for the immediate financial assistance so rendered the Wirtschaftshilfe would have been lost; following its disappearance the local self-help schemes could not have lasted very long, and without the multitudinous money-saving activities of these branch organizations more than half of Germany's student population would have been compelled already to leave the universities.

Another commendable feat of the European Student Relief is the establishment of a somewhat unique savings bank for students. By special arrangements with the Government, students will be able in the future to convert part of their savings into foreign currencies, and by so "hedging" to protect themselves against a further devaluation of the Mark. With no loss to its own treasury E.S.R. buys from the students through this bank such marks as it needs for its own work and, in addition, arranges for an exchange of currencies between the students and foreign tourists visiting Germany.

Why help German students?

There is absolutely no doubt but that the German students need and deserve help, and at once. Caught in a net of adverse circumstances for

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[S the Wirtschaftshilfe an efficient means through which to help the German students? One self-help branch organization during February 1923 had a turn-over of 20,000,000 Marks, and it has a capital of only 3,000,000. How many business organizations throughout the world can show or would like to be faced with the necessity of a capital turn-over 6 times each month?
.....

which they themselves are in no way responsible, they are faced with the alternative of giving up their studies or permanently injuring their health, and possibly killing themselves by overtaxing their strength. They have done what they can to help themselves. They have raised more money within their own country than they have received from outside; but these domestic sources have been dried up by a general economic depression. They are an essential asset for their country's rehabilitation and for the progress of the world. They have a vision of service which should not be dimmed and a wholesome scheme for

self-help which ought to be encouraged throughout the world. They are human beings in distress.

There is equally no doubt but that the European Student Relief organization is by far the best channel through which relief for the intellectual classes is administered in Germany today. Its leaders have vision. Its administrative personnel are trained. It is working in direct contact and harmony with a national economic organization which is a model in ingenuity of conception and in efficiency of organization and the administrators of which are men who know exactly what the German students need because they themselves have lived through the whole of the educational catastrophe and today are leaders in the educational revolution symbolized by the medical student when he stood in the doorway of the farm house and begged to be allowed to do manual labor. A contribution made through E.S.R. to the German Wirtschaftshilfe is money well invested.

When a ship catches fire or is otherwise threatened with danger at sea a general call is sent broadcast to all other ships to "stand by" in readiness to render possible assistance. If the destruction of the ship becomes imminent a distress call is sent far and wide for immediate succor. "S.O.S.," "S.O.S." the ship's radio hurls repeatedly into the ether. Upon the seven seas there does not sail one ship today the captain of which would not hasten to respond. Not only as a duty but as an opportunity he considers such a call.

In Germany at this very moment the "Ship of Education," having been struck by an economic tornado, is floating helpless in a stormy sea. War-

Those who are nearest and most closely associated with the German students are doing all that they can to relieve some of the difficulties of the situation. Sweden is sending to the Wirtschaftshilfe approximately 10,000 Kronen each month. The Dutch students are working through their newspapers for donations. Chinese students studying in Germany have sent a very urgent appeal to their friends back home. A group of other foreign students led by the Americans, Brazilians and Swiss are preparing a big money campaign among all foreigners living in Germany. These persons know the situation first hand, and to know is to help in its relief.

nings concerning her threatened destruction were sent out several months ago. Now comes the distress call. This ship is laden with treasures that mankind can ill afford to lose; the ship itself is well worth saving; and on board there are fellow-human beings in distress. S.O.S.! The German students must be rescued and their disabled ship brought into port.

R. H. B., Berlin, April 1923.

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Included in the E.S.R. program of relief are the students and, in some localities, the professors of Germany, Russia, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Latvia, Esthonia, Lithuania, Hungary, Roumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Greece, Turkey, and refugee students scattered here and there in a number of other countries. Further information concerning the intellectual needs

of Central Europe and Russia will be sent gladly to interested persons or organizations. Contributions to meet these needs may be made to National Student Relief Organizations or sent direct to The Comptroller, European Student Relief, 16 Boulevard des Philosophes, Geneva, Switzerland.

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Travelers now in Germany or who expect to visit this country soon:—

A depreciated German Mark, which gives you an opportunity to live in Germany at no great personal cost, means shattered careers, blasted hopes, and untold privations to the present student generations of this country. "An S.O.S. In Behalf of Germany's Students," tells something of the struggles and problems of these 120,000 future leaders. A great humanitarian effort is being made to alleviate their sufferings and to save their "Self-Help" organization. Detailed information concerning this effort you may obtain from Mr. A. W. Bonsey, 17 Tieckstrasse, Berlin, N. 4, or from Mr. Raymond T. Rich, Münchner Strasse 15, Dresden A-24. Visitors are not only welcome but are invited to call at either of these addresses.

AFFAIRS connected with relief work made it necessary recently for an E.S.R. representative to spend several weeks at the Hotel Salmen, Freiburg i. B., Germany. Somewhat to his astonishment, when he stated his business on the day of his arrival, a reduction was made at once on both his room and his meals: and, since he spoke very little German, the proprietor, who speaks fluent English, offered his services as interpreter.

On the day of his departure this representative was given another pleasant surprise. The proprietors of the Hotels Salmen and Freiburger Hof, "the two brothers Kiechle," presented to him for E.S.R. as a parting gift and "as our contribution to a good cause," an envelope containing a refund of the room charges which he had paid. At the same time they assured him that a cordial welcome to Freiburg and an opportunity to inspect the self-help schemes of the local University students awaits every traveler in Germany who is interested in the student conditions of modern Europe. These two brothers also have under consideration a campaign to raise funds for the German students in all of the local hotels and pensions.

(Reprint from "Catching The Spirit of E.S.R.," Student Service Bulletin XIX.)